

**CITY OF BRIDGEPORT
STRATFIELD HISTORIC DISTRICT
REGULAR MEETING
JANUARY 6, 2015**

ATTENDANCE: Susan Tabachnick, Acting Chair; Jasmin Richards, Frank Borres

STAFF: William Minor, Land Use Director

OTHERS: Ms. Parveen Choudhury, Mr. Mohammed Choudhury, and
Yuksel DeGagci

CALL TO ORDER.

Commissioner Tabachnick called the meeting at 7:37 p.m. A quorum was present.

PUBLIC HEARING.

Certificate of Appropriateness: Application #2014-10 by Parveen Choudhury for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows at 814 Laurel Avenue in the Stratfield Historic District.

Ms. Choudhury came forward and introduced herself and her brother, Mr. Choudhury. Mr. Choudhury explained that they did not know they needed a building permit to replace the windows. Mr. Choudhury said that a neighbor had complained that they were replacing the windows and an inspector came out. This was when they learned that they were in an historic district. He also mentioned that he had seen a historic plaque on another house, but didn't know that their house was also historic.

Commissioner Tabachnick explained that at the last meeting, one of the City Attorneys had been present and suggested to Ms. Choudhury's cousin that they check with an attorney about whether their title insurance included the fact that the house was in an historic district.

Commissioner Tabachnick said that the Commissioners understood that Ms. Choudhury had spent a significant amount of money on vinyl windows, but the Commission does not allow vinyl windows in the Historic District.

Mr. Choudhury asked if there was a way to cover up the vinyl windows. Commissioner Tabachnick explained that there was no way to do this. She suggested that the original windows be restored and storm windows be installed.

Mr. DeGagci, the contractor, came forward and said that he had not been told that the house was an historical building. The house next door had vinyl windows and since the

owner didn't know the house was in an historic district, he used the same type of window as next door. Commissioner Tabachnick asked if the old sashes had been discarded. The Contractor said that a crew had started to remove the windows on the second and third floors.

Commissioner Tabachnick then announced that unless there was something else, she would close the hearing so the Commissioners could discuss this. She explained that Mr. Minor would give them a decision within a few days. Commissioner Tabachnick said that the Commissioners understood that this was a difficult situation. She explained that any changes to the exterior of the house need to have the Commission's permission.

NEW BUSINESS.

- **Application #2014-10 by Parveen Choudhury for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace windows at 814 Laurel Avenue in the Stratfield Historic District.**

Commissioner Tabachnick said that it was really difficult when the applicants who want to do the right thing come before the Commission while others ignore the historic district regulations. She said that if the applicants have title insurance, they may be able file a claim. Mr. Minor explained that title searchers are following the chain of ownership rather than the specific address. The notations about a residence being in an historic district are on the address file. Discussion followed.

**** COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVE TO DENY APPLICATION TO INSTALL VINYL WINDOWS ON THE FRONT AND SIDES OF THE HOUSE THAT ARE VISIBLE FROM THE STREET.**

- **ANY POTENTIAL WOODEN WINDOWS MUST BE APPROVED BY THE COMMISSION PRIOR TO INSTALLATION.**

**** COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

OLD BUSINESS.

Commissioner Tabachnick said that she had copies of the violation notices that had been received and asked how the Commission would move forward with these.

Commissioner Richards said that she had concerns about the house on the corner of Clinton Avenue where there was a fire some time ago. She said that someone has put large business signs on the building. A brief discussion followed about whether the signs would be allowed.

Commissioner Tabachnick said that she had an issue of Connecticut Preservation News for Sept/Oct of 2014 regarding a set of guidelines for demolitions. She said that she would scan it along with another one about an alternative method for approving simple improvements such as replacing a roof, and email it to the Commissioners. Discussion followed about the decline of the houses and blight on Clinton Avenue. Commissioner Tabachnick suggested that perhaps a meeting be held with the City representatives about these issues. Commissioner Bores said that he would put it on the NRZ agenda.

Commissioner Borres offered to officially recommend that the Commission explore how to communicate to all the home owners in the historic district and the title searchers about what it means to live in an historic district.

**MINUTES OF DECEMBER 2013 AND JULY 2014, OCTOBER 7, 2014 AND
NOVEMBER 2014.**

There was not a quorum to approve minutes.

ADJOURNMENT.

**** COMMISSIONER BORRES MOVED TO ADJOURN.**

**** COMMISSIONER RICHARDS SECONDED.**

**** THE MOTION PASSED UNANIMOUSLY.**

The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

S. L. Soltes
Telesco Secretarial Services.